

# Lithuania Makes Formal Offer to Suspend Independence Laws

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Associated Press

MOSCOW, May 23—The Lithuanian legislature offered again today to suspend some of the laws it has passed since its March 11 declaration of independence from the Soviet Union if the Kremlin will agree to negotiate a peaceful transition to full sovereignty for the Baltic republic.

The offer, in the form of an overwhelmingly approved resolution, did not spell out which laws would be suspended, but the Kremlin has objected most strongly to legislation creating special identity cards for Lithuanian citizens, barring Soviet army draft boards in the republic and establishing Lithuanian control over its borders. The legislature did not,

however, offer to rescind or suspend the independence declaration itself.

According to a text made available by the legislature, the resolution offers "to suspend temporarily, for the period of official interstate negotiations, those actions and decisions arising from realization of the [independence declaration] related to interests that could be defined by both parties as objects of negotiations."

There was no immediate response from the Soviet leadership, which has steadfastly refused to negotiate independence for Lithuania or for the other two Baltic republics, Latvia and Estonia, which also have announced their intention to leave the Soviet Union, but through a slower process than the immediate secession declared by Lithuania.

Leaders of the three Baltic republics have said they are willing to compromise with the Kremlin but that they will not surrender their ultimate goal of total separation from the Soviet Union, which forcibly annexed the three formerly independent republics in 1940.

The Soviets responded to Lithuania's declaration by cutting off shipments to the republic of oil, natural gas and other key raw materials in mid-April. Since then, factories in the republic have fallen idle, traffic has dried up, and tens of thousands of people have lost their jobs. The Kremlin also has blocked hard-currency transfers to all three republics but so far has not moved to extend tough economic sanctions to Latvia and Estonia.

Lithuanian officials said today that the Soviet energy embargo will soon force all but emergency vehicles off the road, and President Vytautas Landsbergis encouraged citizens to "survive as though we were in a surrounded fortress."

"We are poor, but we'll not starve to death," Landsbergis said in a broadcast speech. "Our main weapon is unity and stamina."

In Estonia, meanwhile, a committee heading a strike by ethnic-Russian workers to protest Estonia's separatist drive sent the workers back to their jobs today, the Soviet news agency Tass reported. Tass said the committee had determined that the goal of publicizing its cause had been achieved.